

Closing Gitmo endangers our U.S. national security, and it is a bad idea. And that is just the way it is.

□ 1745

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES NOMINATION PROCESS

(Mr. ROTHFUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, when our Founders wrote the Constitution, they had the wisdom to create a system of checks and balances among the three branches of government. They knew this would limit power, protect against abuses, and promote liberty.

Under our Constitution, the President has the right to nominate Justices to the Supreme Court, but one House of the Congress, the Senate, has the coequal right to consent to such an appointment. One branch has a power, another has a check.

Today, with a vacancy on the Supreme Court, we have a chance to see this system of checks and balances in action. In deciding whether to consent to an appointment to the Supreme Court, the Senate should assess whether the President has been acting consistent with the Constitution.

The chart to my left highlights just a few of President Obama's unconstitutional actions since he was reelected in 2012. These actions have been frequent, repeated, and grave. These actions have poisoned the well of deliberation for any appointment by this President.

In that light, why wouldn't the Senate withhold consent? It is a game the President chose to play, and withholding consent to his appointment is an appropriate consequence.

GUANTANAMO BAY

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, once again, Congress acted to stop the transfer of GTMO detainees to the United States. Guantanamo Bay is a much better venue to hold these known terrorists than to have them on American soil. Yet the President wants to defy Congress and the American people, who desire not to have this happen, and bring them onto American soil.

It endangers our courts, our system of government, and our people by bringing them here or even ultimately releasing them. We need to have the President, if he tries this and loses in court, once again, take a lesson in the final 10 months of his term that he needs to uphold the law that we passed and that he signed.

THE TEXAS WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AGAINST MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALLEN). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today is March 2, 2016. 180 years ago, on March 2, 1836, in a little place called Washington-on-the-Brazos down in Texas, people of what is now Texas declared their independence from the nation of Mexico—March 2, 1836. Tonight I am here to talk a little bit about those folks 180 years ago and the cause and the result of the Texas War of Independence against Mexico.

We have to back up a little bit. For a long time, almost 300 years, what is now Texas was controlled by the Spanish. They claimed the land in Texas. It was sparsely populated: some Indian tribes, but not very many folks. At some point, Spain also controlled what is now Mexico.

Mexico, the nation of Mexico, chose to declare independence from that European country of Spain and went to war with Spain to secure their independence back in 1820. That revolution—they called it the War of Independence—was successful. Mexico set up an independent nation, a democracy. They formed a government and a constitution very similar to the United States. Texas was a part of Mexico at that time and was part of a state called Coahuila. It was the Coahuila de Texas, two areas of northern Mexico that were one state in Mexico.

Things were fine until Mexico elected a President by the name of Santa Anna. When he became President of Mexico, this particular President abolished the democracy, abolished the constitution of 1824 that set up the Government of Mexico, and declared himself the dictator of Mexico. In fact, he destroyed the Republic of Mexico, the democracy of Mexico, and put himself as dictator-in-charge.

Throughout the history of the world, we know of a lot of dictators, but they all seem to have one thing in common: they take away the rights—the civil rights—of the people.

Some people in Mexico didn't like this, and therefore they started their own secession movement, their own revolution, their own independence. Now, most Americans know that Texas was one of those areas in Mexico that declared its independence from Mexico, and that independence, that revolution, was successful. But there were other areas of northern Mexico—and here on this map I have some of those areas—that also declared their independence for the reason they wanted to be free. They wanted independence from the dictatorship.

There was the Republic of the Yucatan, there was the Republic Coahuila, and there were three or four other republics, and the Republic of the Rio Grande. Several areas of population in Mexico declared their independence.

So what happened? Santa Anna not only was the dictator, but he was the commander in chief, and he was the

general. He was the guy. He moved his army from Mexico City into these areas of revolution, areas where people were fighting against the government, the republic, or the dictatorship of Santa Anna. He had squelched, really, all of these revolutionary movements; although, portions of these areas did declare independence and appeared to have independence for a period of time.

So that brings us to 1835, several months before Texas declared independence. Here is what started the Texas War of Independence:

While all of these other movements—some were going on, some would go on a few months later. But during this period, there was insurrection in northern Mexico because people were trying to seek independence. It started on October 2, 1835, at Gonzales, Texas, a small little community in Gonzales, Texas.

Remember, Texas is a part of Mexico at this time. The Mexican Government, when it was a free government, had encouraged immigration into this part of Texas—not just from the United States, but from Mexico and from European countries.

But this town of Gonzales, Texas, was in possession of a cannon. The cannon was to protect themselves from the people who lived in the area that were hostiles, as they were called in those days. Native Americans are who they were. And that cannon was for that purpose.

The Mexican Government said: We want the cannon back. You cannot have the cannon in Gonzales, Texas. We don't want you having it.

The Mexican Government made the demand on October 2 to the folks in Gonzales, Texas: Return the cannon to the Mexican military.

The people, the settlers of Gonzales, said: No. We are not going to do it. We are not giving you back the cannon. We need it.

So they resisted. They even made a flag. They called it the Come and Take It flag. You may have seen that recently. It is still popular with a lot of folks. It was a flag that said, "Come and take it," with a cannon on it. They hoisted this, and they had a skirmish with the Mexican Army, who came to take the cannon. Shots were fired on both sides, multiple shots. Apparently, most of the people shooting weren't great marksmen. A couple of Mexican soldiers were wounded, and they retreated without the cannon. But that event started the actual shooting war in the War of Independence.

Months before that, there had been complaints. There had been letters written to the Mexican Government. Stephen F. Austin, the Father of Texas, had been imprisoned in Mexico City trying to get some civil rights for people who lived in what is now Texas. But it all came to a head at this event in October of 1835.

It is interesting what started the Texas War of Independence, the shooting war, is very similar to what started

the shooting war between the colonists and Great Britain. You remember the British were in Boston. We have all heard about the march through Lexington and Concord.

The purpose the British Army marched through Lexington and Concord in the 1770s was to take the firearms, the weapons, away from the colonists, out of the armories in Lexington and Concord. Of course, the colonists refused. They fired back, and it started the shooting war with the British Empire, later a successful War of Independence.

It is interesting that both of them started when government showed up to take the weapons, the firearms, of the people who lived in that area.

The shooting war started, and, quite frankly, it was successful up until about this time in 1836. An army of Texans had entered a place called the Alamo in February of 1836—February 23, 1836—because of the approaching army of Santa Anna that was coming north into Texas—Tejas, as it was called.

The men that assembled at the Alamo to try to stop the invading army coming in were an interesting bunch. There were 100 to 187 of them. They came from almost all of the then-States of the United States. They came from several foreign countries, including Great Britain, Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, and Austria. Many of them were from what we call Mexico, and they had come into the Alamo.

An interesting name that is unique to Texas history is that Texans of Spanish Mexican descent were called Tejanos, a unique name for Texans, Tejanos of Spanish Mexican or Hispanic descent. There were eleven of them at the Alamo.

The 180 to 187 were from all walks of life. I told you they were from all different countries. They were not only Anglos and Tejanos, but there were two African Americans, two Blacks, at the Alamo, we understand. They were lawyers; they were frontiersmen; they were shopkeepers; they were young, and they were old.

There was even a United States Congressman at the Alamo. His name was David Crockett. He was a former Congressman from the State of Tennessee. He had gone to Texas to help in the revolution and also to see the fortunes that he could make as an individual.

There were a lot of reasons why people came to Texas, but 180 to 187 of them were in the Alamo to defend and to protect that concept of freedom.

This is a painting of what the Alamo looked like at the time those men were in the Alamo.

So they entered the Alamo—let's get the sequence of events correct—February 23. They are in the Alamo on March 2 when Texas declared independence. They were in the Alamo for 13 days. The final battle at the Alamo was on March 6, 1836.

While they were in the Alamo, they were led by the commander of the

Alamo, who is really my most favorite person in all of history. He was a 27-year-old lawyer from South Carolina by way of Alabama. He had come to Texas to settle in the 1830s, and his name was William Barret Travis. He was placed in command of the Alamo, of all 180, 187 of the folks that were there. While he was in the Alamo—he entered on February 23—he realized that the enemy was going to be a superior force.

□ 1800

In the cold, damp Alamo, a blue norther, as we called it in those days, had come. It was cold. The Alamo is near San Antonio, Texas. He wrote a letter asking for help. I have a copy of his letter on my wall in my office.

Here is what it said. To me, it is one of the most passionate letters ever written about freedom. It is dated February 24, 1836, in Bexar.

To the People of Texas and All Patriots and Fellow Citizens. I am besieged by a thousand or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to 3,000 or 4,000 in 4 or 5 days. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion. Otherwise, the fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot, and the flag still waves proudly over the wall. I ask that you come to my aid with all dispatch. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his own honor and his country—victory or death. William Barret Travis, Commander.

That is a portion of the letter that he wrote that he sent out throughout the area of Texas asking for help. The courier was Jim Bonham, another South Carolinian that had come to Texas. He was William Barret Travis' boyhood friend. He would take this letter to different areas of Texas asking for help.

Only one group of folks answered that letter, and it was the men in Gonzales, Texas, where this all started. They decided that they would leave Gonzales, which is near San Antonio, march to the Alamo and help defend the Alamo. There were 32 of them.

When they arrived at the Alamo—some historians have said as they walked into the Alamo—Travis said they came here to die. That brought the total up to about 180 to 187.

If you will, Mr. Speaker, think about what those 32 men left behind. This is a rough area of the world in Texas, just the weather. But the people they left behind were their wives and their kids because the men had gone to defend the Alamo.

After the Alamo fell and all of those men were killed, it was then left up to those wives and children to make an existence in frontier Texas. They, in their own right, were amazing people that went ahead and forged an existence after Texas independence was declared.

So they are in the Alamo. On March 2, Texas declares independence. Probably the men in the Alamo never knew that Texas declared independence.

Finally, on March 6, after 13 days, Santa Anna and his superior army stormed the Alamo. All 187 Texans were killed. If any surrendered, they were executed.

The Mexican casualties, according to Santa Anna, were about 1,000 casualties on the Mexican side. The Tejanos that were in the Alamo, all 11, were also killed in the attack.

Travis made the comment in a later letter that was sent out of the Alamo before this March 6 attack that defeat will cost the enemy more than victory. It turns out he was right.

Anyway, the Alamo fell. The flag that flew over the Alamo—I don't know if you can see it, Mr. Speaker—was not the Lone Star flag. A lot of people think it was the Lone Star flag, which is our Texas State flag.

It is the flag of Mexico with the Mexican eagle removed from the flag. And the date of 1824 was placed on that flag. Most historians think that was the flag that flew over the Alamo.

What is the significance of this? 1824 was the year that the constitution was written for the Republic of Mexico. The defenders of the Alamo wanted a constitutional government.

That is why they flew this flag, the 1824 constitution flag, to let the world know that is why they were defending the concept of liberty, freedom, and a constitutional government as opposed to a dictatorship.

But the Alamo fell. Santa Anna then started moving northeast through Texas. The Alamo is in San Antonio, Bexar County. It was just called Bexar in those days.

Meanwhile, an individual by the name of Sam Houston, who was the commander of all Texas armies, the few that there were, had been preparing an army while the men in the Alamo were at the Alamo.

He was assembling more volunteers—everybody was a volunteer—not only from Texas, but other Tejanos. Other folks from other States formed an army to defeat or to take on Santa Anna.

Santa Anna had actually split his army into three different columns. He was moving his three columns up through northeast Texas from Mexico.

Sam Houston and his army weren't ready; so, he didn't attack Santa Anna. In fact, he moved east. It is called the Runaway Scrape.

Not only was the army moving east away from Santa Anna's invaders, but the people who lived there were leaving, too, because they were afraid of the Mexican Army.

They were afraid of Santa Anna, is who they were afraid of. So you have the army, you have the settlers, and you have everybody moving northeast, called the Runaway Scrape.

Sam Houston continued to move. He would not engage the Mexican Army. In fact, some Texas folks—politicians—were irritated with Sam Houston because he wouldn't go to battle.

They kept moving east. They went through San Antonio, what is now

Interstate 10 between San Antonio and Houston. They went right through that area, right through what is now Houston. The Mexican Army is following him. Santa Anna is following him.

They go to a place called Harrisburg, which is just east of Houston, on the marshes of the San Jacinto River, a marshy area, to a peninsula, and Sam Houston stopped on April 20, 1836.

Santa Anna continued to march and came on the peninsula. Both armies are on the peninsula. On April 21, here is what happened.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, most battles throughout history, no matter where they are, no matter who they are—the Greeks, the Romans, everybody—start at sunup or right before sunup. But that didn't happen on April 21, 1836.

The Texans went to battle in the middle of the afternoon. They weren't going to wait until the next day. The soldiers were ready to do battle. Sam Houston really had no choice but to lead them into battle. And so he did.

In the middle of the afternoon, just one column—there were only a handful of them, more than at the Alamo—a single column, single file, was led by an individual playing a flute, another person carrying the flag, and a third individual beating the drums.

The flutist didn't know any songs. So he played an old—we would call it a house of ill repute song, "Come to the Bower." I don't know the lyrics of it, Mr. Speaker, but you can look it up.

He played on his flute "Come to the Bower," which was the song they marched into battle with, carrying a flag of Lady Liberty, a semi-clothed individual on the flag. Then you had the drummer.

Then you had all of these really scary-looking folks going into battle, the Texas Army. Most of them didn't have any kind of uniforms. They dressed like frontiersmen. They had a shotgun, a long rifle, a tomahawk, knives, well-armed individuals.

Also with them was Juan Seguin. Juan Seguin was a captain in the Texas Army. He was a Tejano. He led this cavalry of Tejanos to protect one of the flanks when the Texans were marching down. He, like the rest of the Texas Army, did not have uniforms. They wore their normal clothes.

Sam Houston wanted to make sure that the Texans and the foot soldiers didn't mix up the Mexican Army with the Tejanos that were in the cavalry.

So he had all of the Tejanos put in playing card in their sombrero. In those days, apparently, the cards weren't small like they are today. They were big.

They stuck this 4x6 card—or something like that—in their hats, their sombreros, so that everybody would know that they were on the side of liberty, not part of the Mexican Army, a unique part of Texas history.

So, in the middle of the day, what had happened was Santa Anna was taking a nap. It was siesta time. Now,

some say historically—modern revisionists—that this isn't exactly true, but I believe it because I want to believe it.

Santa Anna was preoccupied with an individual that was loyal to the Republic of Texas, an individual that we fondly call the Yellow Rose of Texas now. Therefore, he wasn't prepared to go into battle when the Texans were coming down this small hill.

In any event, they were caught by surprise. This battle lasted 18 minutes. Eleven Texans were killed, 600 of the enemy were killed, and the rest were captured. In fact, more were captured later than in the Texas Army.

The battle lasted 18 minutes. Military historians studied this battle because of its decisiveness. So General Houston led one battle. It was successful. Santa Anna was captured.

Texas claims independence from Mexico—that was April 21, 1836—and goes ahead and forms a government, forms a republic and, in September of the same year, elects a president and a vice president.

From October of 1835 to September of 1836 was the War of Independence. Declaration of independence was on March 2. April 21 the battle was successful. Texas is a free and independent country and remains so for 9 years.

The battle cry at the Battle of San Jacinto, as you have heard in history, was "Remember the Alamo." "Remember Goliad." That was another place where Texans were massacred that fought Santa Anna's army.

This is what Texas looked like when Texas declared independence from Mexico. Maybe you can see it, Mr. Speaker. I don't know.

You see what is now Texas over here, but you see a lot of other land. You see Oklahoma, part of Kansas, part of New Mexico, part of Colorado. It even goes up to part of Idaho, almost to the Canadian border. All of this area here, Texas claimed all of—that is the Republic of Texas—and claimed it for 9 years.

Texas periodically would try to join the United States as the 28th State. Two times Texas tried to join the Union, and two times Congress rejected Texas' approval into the Union.

On the third time, rather than have a treaty with Texas—because Texas was an independent country—a joint resolution was filed.

It passed the House of Representatives and it passed the Senate, because you didn't need two-thirds vote then. We still have those discussions today, don't we? A joint resolution.

By one vote, Texas was admitted to the Union in 1845 and, in 1846, actually came into the United States as the 28th State.

It was a republic once. A lot of people in Texas still think we are a republic, and we seem to act like it sometimes. But we have a unique history.

The history of Texas, why I like it so much, is because everybody wanted to live in Texas, wanted to come to Texas,

of all races, of all nationalities, from all States.

They fought in a war against another nation, a dictator, for the same reason that the 13 colonies fought for independence against Great Britain: for freedom and for liberty.

□ 1815

There is an independent streak that runs through all Texans. It is a state of mind for Texas.

Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 34 minutes remaining.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are of an independent mind, of an independent philosophy. March 2 is an important day for us because our ancestors and people we don't even know about decided that it was worth their lives to fight against tyranny—against a totalitarian government run by a dictator. They were volunteers. They were normal people who just had that flame of liberty in their souls, and they refused to have it taken away from them.

So we remember those folks who created Texas, who fought for independence for Texas, those men at the Alamo—William Barret Travis, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, Jim Bonham, and 187 more individuals. The youngest was 15, Tapley Holland from Ohio. The oldest was 68—who fought and died for that liberty.

When Texas became part of the United States, it had great depth because of the War of Independence. Part of the deal for Texas to be admitted to the Union, even by one vote, was this land that I mentioned to you that was all sold to the Federal Government, to the Union, to pay off the debts of the Republic of Texas. Thus, as we know now, Texas looks like this. All of these other areas became other States that were later admitted to the United States.

When there was the agreement between Texas and the United States to join the Union, it was agreed—and it is still possible—that Texas may divide now the State of Texas into five different States. Now, that is not going to happen, because nobody is going to be able to agree on what should be called "Texas"; but we can divide into five States, and that is the decision of the people who live in Texas.

One of the other provisions of the joint resolution was that Texas may fly its flag, the Lone Star Flag—the flag of the one star, the Lone Star, the Lone Republic—even with the American flag. When you go to Texas, you will see a lot of American flags, and you will see a lot of Texas flags, but most of the Texas flags are flying level with the American flag. They can do that by law. Texas does that because of its agreement and admission into the Union.

Our country has a great history, Mr. Speaker, with 50 States, with all of our territories. Our history is unique. No place on Earth is like the United

States. It is because of our history, because of the diversity of the peoples and cultures in this country. The diversity of Texas, the diversity of the United States is what gives it strength. It is not a weakness. It is a strength.

It is, I think, quite important that we as Members of the House of Representatives, who represent the 50 States of the United States, make sure that we talk about our history—how we are a unique Nation among peoples, how we have always been a unique Nation among peoples—and preserve what those folks at the Alamo fought for and what our folks fought for in the Colonies in wars since then, which are freedom and liberty. Those are not trite words. They are core words. The concept of liberty lives in every person ever born in history. Most people never see it. Most people in the world today aren't free, but there are a few, and those few—some of those few—are in what we call the United States of America.

I thank all of those Texans back in Texas for honoring Texas Independence Day, March 2, 1836. Especially, we should always honor those people who lived in our history who gave their lives for the rest of us, because they were good folk.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DONOVAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, this week, we open Women's History Month—an opportunity for us to celebrate the progress women have made and the amazing contributions that we are responsible for.

We have more women in Congress now than ever before. Women are now the leading breadwinners or are the only breadwinners in 40 percent of households. We have more women who lead major companies and who are in prominent positions, like on the Supreme Court. Women today are more likely to earn college degrees and to attend graduate school than are their male counterparts, and more women are entering traditionally male-dominated fields. That progress has been incredibly swift. We are talking about gains that have really only happened in

the past 60 years. Still, there are many, many milestones that women have yet to reach.

Even with the most women Congress has ever seen, this body, supposedly elected to both represent and reflect the United States, is still overwhelmingly 80 percent male, in fact. Women still make 78 cents for every dollar a man earns, particularly troubling when you think about the 40 percent of women I just mentioned who are supporting their families. Black women make even less at 64 cents on the dollar while Latina women make just 66 cents on the dollar. If this week is any indicator, there are still great numbers of people, primarily men, who feel we are incapable of making our own decisions about our health care.

We have got a long way to go, Mr. Speaker. Part of the reason we can't get all the way there is that we have not passed the Equal Rights Amendment. We have been avoiding ensuring protection for women in the Constitution for almost 100 years. Quite frankly, there is only so much we can do until we offer that basic level of protection.

Mr. Speaker, the ERA was first drafted and introduced in the 1920s. It finally passed in 1972 and was sent to the States for ratification, where it received 35 of the 38 approvals that it needed. Unfortunately, time ran out. One of the reasons we have yet to solve some of the greatest challenges facing our Nation's women is the lack of true protection in the Constitution.

What better way to ensure the right to fair pay for women? What better way to ensure equal treatment in the workplace? What better way to protect against laws that inherently limit women? What better way to protect all of the progress we have made and to ensure that women can continue to excel?

The Equal Rights Amendment would provide the foundation for legislation that protects women from discrimination at every level—legislation that is more necessary now than it has ever been with more and more women leading at home and in the workplace.

We will spend a lot of time in the coming weeks talking about what we need to do for women—from the passage of the Fair Pay Act to ensuring paid leave for women and men. Yet there is one thing that we should have done long ago, and my colleagues are here tonight, on the floor with me, to call for action where we have failed before.

It is now my pleasure to yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), the primary sponsor of the ERA bill.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Representative BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, and the Congressional Progressive Caucus for dedicating this time to talk about passing the Equal Rights Amend-

ment—a cause I have fought for my entire time in Congress.

March is Women's History Month, and we have many accomplishments to celebrate and to be proud of, but we must remain focused on the continued struggle for full equality for women. Without the ERA, this goal will not be fully realized, and half of Americans will not realize their full potential. All of us, men and women, stand to benefit from true gender equality.

Consider, for instance, some laws that are being proposed across the Nation that have disparate negative impacts on women:

In Illinois, a bill sponsored by men is pending that would deny a birth certificate to a newborn of a single mother unless a father is listed on the birth certificate. This would make it impossible for a single mother to enroll her child in a public school, for her child to obtain a driver's license, or for her to collect child support and other benefits for the child. The law is silent on single fathers.

In Kentucky, the State senate has passed a bill sponsored by a man that would force all women who are seeking to terminate pregnancies to undergo ultrasounds, whether they want to or not, and to have doctors describe the images to them. While we cannot know for sure how an ERA would affect the outcome of future Supreme Court cases, we have seen that its absence leaves women vulnerable to discrimination without their having legal recourse.

These legislative efforts to roll back hard-won progress and to curtail rights are directed squarely at women. You will not find equivalent examples of bills that roll back or constrain the rights of men—and men only. Unfortunately, that noble and empowering declaration in our founding document that “all men are created equal” left some of us out. In fact, it leaves about half the population of America out.

Many people are actually surprised when they realize that the United States Constitution does not mention women. That omission has, unfortunately, become a glaring problem when it comes to achieving full equality—and not just a problem for women but for families as well—for everyone. For instance, when women make less than men just because they are women, it is an issue that affects their entire families.

We saw that in the case of Lilly Ledbetter. The Supreme Court found that she had been paid less for doing the very same job as her male counterparts. This not only meant that, for years, she made less money than her male colleagues in order to support her family and to provide for her children throughout her working life, but it meant that she would also spend her entire retirement being less financially secure.

Such unfair and unequal treatment should certainly be prohibited under our Constitution. Yet the late Supreme